



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 15, 2022

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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT ANNOUNCES THE TOGETHER WE HEAL CREATIVE PLACE PROGRAM**

*Mayor's Office and DCASE invest \$5 million in art projects that promote healing in neighborhoods*

**CHICAGO** — Today, Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot, the Mayor's Office of Equity & Racial Justice (OERJ), and the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) announced the launch of the Together We Heal Creative Place Program. This grant initiative supports artists in designing and implementing art projects that promote healing and transformation in Chicago's neighborhoods. Applications for the Creative Place Program will be accepted from June 15 through July 20, 2022, with a focus on communities disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

"A sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and the racial reckoning of the last two years must include an intentional investment in healing and repair," said Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot. "The Together We Heal initiative is just one way in which we are creating more spaces for residents to come together, share their experiences, and build the knowledge and relationships necessary for us all to heal and create a more equitable city."

The goal of the program is to promote dialogue and connection, activate shared spaces, beautify communities, and celebrate local culture. From Fall 2022 through Winter 2024, selected artists and organizations will work in partnership with stakeholders to create projects that strengthen the economic, physical, and social character of a neighborhood or place. This program is part of Mayor Lightfoot's Chicago Recovery Plan, which utilizes once-in-a-generation federal funding and an equity-based investment strategy to catalyze a sustainable economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

"At its core, Together We Heal is a commitment to heal ourselves, heal our communities, and heal our city," said Candace Moore, Chief Equity Officer at the City of Chicago. "Through the Creative Place Program, the City is putting resources in the hands of the community to use art as a vehicle to reflect, reclaim, and reimagine."

The Creative Place Program encourages the development of projects that highlight a community's history and cultural assets by leveraging the creative potential already present and building upon the existing work happening in the community. Projects can



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be focused on any artistic discipline including, but not limited to, architecture, dance, film, music, performance art, photography, public art, or theater. Successful proposals will energize public spaces and invite residents to interact through dialogues, activations, or creative problem-solving. All project work and programming must be free to the public.

Grantees will have the opportunity to participate in a range of technical assistance programs to provide the necessary resources and support to implement project ideas.

“Artists and organizations working together have the power to effect change in their neighborhoods,” said Erin Harkey, Commissioner of the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE). “The projects that will come to life from the Together We Heal Creative Place Program will help further our work to increase access and participation in the arts.”

For more information on the Together We Heal Creative Place Program and to apply for a grant, please visit [chi.gov/togetherweheal](https://chi.gov/togetherweheal).

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### **About The Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events:**

The Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) is dedicated to enriching Chicago’s artistic vitality and cultural vibrancy. This includes fostering the development of Chicago’s non-profit arts sector, independent working artists, and for-profit arts businesses; providing a framework to guide the City’s future cultural and economic growth, via the Chicago Cultural Plan; marketing the City’s cultural assets to a worldwide audience; and presenting high-quality, free, and affordable cultural programs for residents and visitors. Visit [chicago.gov/dcasing](https://chicago.gov/dcasing).

### **About The Office of Equity and Racial Justice:**

The Office of Equity and Racial Justice (OERJ) seeks to advance institutional change that results in an equitable transformation of how we do business across the City of Chicago enterprise. This includes the City’s service delivery, resource distribution, policy creation, and decision-making. OERJ will do this by supporting City departments in normalizing concepts of racial equity, organizing staff to work together for transformational change, and operationalizing new practices, policies, and procedures that result in more fair and just outcomes.